

## ESSAY

# TRADE WARS OR TERRITORIAL WARS, THE NEXT GLOBAL BATTLE?: EVALUATING THE NATURE AND PROBABILITY OF CONFLICTS IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

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# TRADE WARS OR TERRITORIAL WARS, THE NEXT GLOBAL BATTLE?: EVALUATING THE NATURE AND PROBABILITY OF CONFLICTS IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY<sup>†</sup>

## INTRODUCTION

It has been observed that ‘*war doesn’t determine who’s right, only who’s left*’.<sup>2</sup> War is not inevitable, that is a truism indeed. However, it is an undeniable fact of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, that the possibility of war(s) breaking out is a threat that looms over the heads of all modern democratic nation-states, somewhat akin a Damocles’ sword. Therefore, it is in these hard-fought for times of peace that nation-states should expediently ponder on the nature of mitigating mechanisms and institutions to be put into place, to deal with any event that may spark conflicts, on a global-scale, in the near future.

The motivation behind this essay arose from an abiding curiosity to *peer into the crystal ball* and dispel the feeling of sheer and absolute confusion on the manner and form of crisis that may give rise to such a transnational picking up of arms, both metaphorical and literal. It is very much possible that conventional conflicts on a global scale may suck all countries into its fold and the development of a contingency plan to deal with such an eventuality is the need of the times. This can only be achieved if it is known what kind of global conflict need we prepare for.

## §I. THE PROPOSITION OF THE ESSAY

The salience of this essay thus lies in reaching a conclusion on the question: ‘*Which is the next global battle, trade wars or territorial wars?*’ or is the answer something absolutely

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<sup>†</sup> The *Oxford University Standard for the Citation of Legal Authorities* (4th edn, Hart Publishers 2009) has been used throughout the essay for purpose of maintaining uniformity in citations and bibliography.

<sup>2</sup> Des McHale, *Ready Wit: A Treasury of the Cleverest Things Ever Said on Any Subject* (Prion Books Ltd 2006) 44.

*different than we expect?* This essay, shall thus be arguing the proposition that ‘*considering the case made for the improbability of large-scale pan-global territorial wars in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the phenomenon of territorial wars shall be subsumed by the greater probability of other, more complex, forms of conflicts like trade wars, information warfare, and terrorism, etc., with the next global battle primarily being trade wars*’.

## §II. AIM AND OBJECTIVE OF THE ESSAY

The author of the essay (hereinafter ‘*author*’) shall prove the proposition stated in the previous section, by fulfilling *four* objectives throughout the course of this essay:

- (i). Emphasize through the use of ‘*Neoliberal*’ and ‘*Institutionalism Approach*’ in international relations how modern democratic nation-states participating in certain cross-border functional-transactional activities like trade, investment, etc., paves the way for higher degree of cooperation and complex interdependence in other related areas like social/ cultural exchange, communication, political relations among governments, etc. An attempt shall also be made to show how such intense form of ‘*international cooperation*’ and the international institutions arising thereof lend to the exercises of ‘*strategic restraint*’ by nation-states, thereby ensuring a more stable and pacifist world order;<sup>3</sup>
- (ii). Elaborate through the use of the military doctrine of ‘*Mutual Assured Destruction*’ (MAD) how, by offering a ‘*Hobson’s choice*’ between (a) exercising nuclear restraint by all nation-states or (b) perishing in a thermonuclear retaliatory attacks, led to the maintenance of a *status quo* called the ‘*Balance of Power*’ (BOP) in the international arena. Furthermore, this section shall highlight how the MAD doctrine curbed the escalation of conventional means of warfare into a full blown war, nuclear or otherwise;
- (iii). Establish through the absence of any major conventional warfare in the past *seven* decades, the success of the above *deterrence rather than defend and defeat* strategies in maintain international peace;
- (iv). Demonstrate how the vacuum left by the improbability of territorial wars shall be subsumed by the greater probability of other, more complex, forms of conflicts like

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<sup>3</sup> John A Kroll, ‘The Complexity of Interdependence’ (1993) 37(3) International Studies Quarterly 321, 321-22.

trade wars, information warfare, and terrorism, etc. Moreover, the author's intention is to predict and provide justifications for why trade wars are the most likely form of war in the foreseeable future.

Furthermore, the essay will appraise these elements from the vantage point of power politics with an emphasis on changes in nuclear deterrence strategy since World War II. The essay shall engage with the socio-political, historical and ethical elements of the debate on territorial conflicts, trade wars as well as other forms of wars. Therefore, the author's attempt throughout the length of this essay will be to bridge that gap in contemporary scholarship on the subject. How successfully and to what degree the author achieves this is left for the reader to decide.

However, a caveat is warranted. As is with every argumentative essay, it is understandable and at times even expected, that an author's worldview, preferences and predilections may colour their analysis and get reflected in the arguments and conclusions that are drawn. With this realization in mind, at the very outset, the author of this essay feels it incumbent on him to declare that he shall strive to examine the central question in faithful adherence to the principles of scholarly integrity and dialogue, while maintaining the greatest standards of objectivity.

### **§III. THE ARGUMENTS FOR THE PROPOSITION**

This essay proposes *the improbability of large-scale pan-global territorial wars in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and predicts that the phenomenon of territorial wars shall be subsumed by the greater probability of other, more complex, forms of conflicts like trade wars, information warfare, and terrorism, etc., with the next global battle primarily being trade wars*'. This proposition shall be substantiated on the basis of *three* arguments:

#### *A. The Neoliberal and Institutionalism Approach Argument*

Since the 1950 onwards, a phenomenon of increasing regional integration could be observed among all sovereign nation-states of the world. The regional integration being referred to in this section is an intense form of '*international cooperation*' in cross-border trade and

investment activities, relations and transactions (over and above the transactional links between business corporations), leading to higher levels of social/ cultural exchange, communication, political relations among governments, etc. What is interesting to note is that this picture is in consonance with the *neoliberal school of international relations*, but it stands in stark contrast to the *realist theorization of international relations* as a struggle for power based on ‘*national interest*’.<sup>4</sup>

This line of thinking is characterized by an ‘*absence of hierarchy among issues*’ (i.e., military security does not dominate the agenda anymore). Military force is no longer used as an instrument of foreign policy. With the rise of other actors in a ‘*pluralist*’ democracy, there is a realization among said actors that violent conflicts clearly do not bear fruit on the international front. Therefore, it may be surmised that there is now a move away from some forms of *hard power* (particularly, military force no longer being in vogue as an instrument of foreign policy) and is being progressively substituted for complementing combinations of *hard* (e.g., trade, investments, etc) and *soft power* (e.g., diplomacy, culture exchanges, shared political and moral valued, philanthropic activities, etc).

In this changing milieu, transnational and transactional relations become important as international relations are now seen to be supplemented by relations among private individuals, groups, and societies. This higher degree of transnational ties and transactions leads to peaceful relations, that in turn adds to more than a mere absence of war. A sense of community is achieved: people come to agree that their conflicts can be resolved without resort to large-scale physical force. A number of conditions are encouraged and buttressed the emergence of a ‘*cobweb*’ of security communities: increased social communication, greater mobility of persons, stronger economic ties, a wider range of mutual human transactions, better access to electronic means of communication and ease of foreign travel, etc.

According to the *institutionalism approach to international relations*, there has also been a shift in focus from state-state relations to transnational relations between people, groups and organizations belonging to different nation-states. This has contributed to a world society that focuses and emphasizes on the emergence, spread, consolidation and internalization of institutional norms, practices and conventions considered ‘*legitimate*’ for participation in

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<sup>4</sup> Robert Jackson and Georg Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches* (5th edn, Oxford University Press Reprinted 2014) 46-48.

global politics and governance.<sup>5</sup> Case-in-point in the Indian context may be the recent incident of China condemning the *pulwama* terror attack in February 2019.<sup>6</sup> Even though China is a known ally of Pakistan, it chose to condemn the incident in order to safeguard its trade interests with India as well as not escalate tensions near the Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir region that is home to China's Ambitious *One-Belt-One-Road* initiative.

To give effect to this shift towards a high degree of international cooperation and complex interdependence, nation-states set up international institutions to deal with '*common problems*' like postwar development, economic recession, global healthcare, world peace, etc and more recently, terrorism, tragedy of commons and climate change. With the growing involvement of transnational actors (TNAs), non-governmental organizations (NGO's), multinational corporations (MNC's), and philanthropic foundations are increasingly being seen as representatives of an emerging global civil society who can reduce democratic deficits by strengthening participation, accountability and transparency, thus leading to a more peaceful and stable world order. This plurality of different actors other than national governments has been termed as '*pluralism*'.

Numerous empirical studies and international theorists have based their analysis on the basis the post-world war, mass-consumption, welfare state structures existing in the United States of America, Japan and Western Europe, etc. Such interconnection of activities helped create common values and identities among the civil society from different states through the '*common sense*' of globalization. As a result, paving the way for peaceful, cooperative relations by making the opportunity cost associated with war and the concomitant loss of trade, exceedingly costly.

### *B. The M.A.D Argument for Maintaining the Balance of Power: Through the Nuclear Strategic Looking Glass*

This section shall elaborate on maintenance of the Balance of Power (hereinafter '*BOP*') amongst nation-states *via* nuclear deterrence and its contribution to ensure a more pacifist

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<sup>5</sup> Jonas Tallberg *et al*, 'Explaining the Transnational Design of International Organizations (2014) 68(4) International Organization 741, 741.

<sup>6</sup> 'China Condemns Strike Sans Naming Pakistan' *The Daily Pioneer* (New Delhi, 17 February 2019) <<https://www.dailypioneer.com/2019/page1/china-condemns-strike-sans-naming-pakistan.html>> accessed 14 March 2019.

future. For this section the author shall be employing an argument based on a nuclear deterrence doctrine popularly dubbed as '*Mutual Assured Destruction*' (hereinafter '*MAD*').<sup>7</sup> The basic outline of MAD doctrine was formulated in the early years of the Kennedy administration in the United States.<sup>8</sup>

This military doctrine offered a '*Hobson's choice*' of sorts, stating that in the event that a large-scale conventional conflict escalates into a full-scale use of nuclear weapons by *two* or more opposing sides, there are only *two* possible outcomes: *One*, it shall result in the complete thermonuclear annihilation of both the attacker and the defender as each side shall be prepared to destroy the other's cities and society in a retaliatory strike. The alternate was to resolve the conflict through other means.

In the former scenario, it was concluded that the outcome would be so dreadful that both sides would be deterred from starting a nuclear war or even taking actions that might lead to it. Thus, a situation was reached, quite unique in the history of military deterrence, where the world's most powerful nuclear states have been locked in a military stalemate for almost half a century.

By the early 1960s, the nuclear arsenals of the United States and the Soviet Union had grown so large and sophisticated that neither country could entirely destroy the other's retaliatory force by launching first, even with a surprise attack. Starting a nuclear war was therefore tantamount to committing suicide. This '*stalemate*' entered into by the United States and Soviet Union after careful nuclear posturing and increasing military capabilities was meant to achieve a bipolar BOP to protect the security of the participant nation.<sup>9</sup> The '*equilibrium*' reached thus prevented '*Gramscian hegemony*'.<sup>10</sup>

During the Cold War, many scholars and international affairs analysts believed that MAD would make the world comparatively stable and peaceable because it warranted great

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<sup>7</sup> Percy Löwenhard and Norman C Freund, 'Nuclear Deterrence: The Rationality of the Irrational Nuclear Deterrence: The Rationality of the Irrational [with Comment and Rejoinder]' (1987) 4(3) International Journal on World Peace 73, 73-75.

<sup>8</sup> Donald M Snow, 'Current Nuclear Deterrence Thinking: An Overview and Review' (1979) 23(3) International Studies Quarterly 445, 446-7.

<sup>9</sup> Partha Chatterjee, 'The Classical Balance of Power Theory' (1972) 9(1) Journal of Peace Research 51, 51

<sup>10</sup> Mark McNally, 'The Organization of Balance and Equilibrium in Gramsci's Hegemony' (2008) 29(4) History of Political Thought 662, 665-67.

vigilance and caution in international politics and restrained use of threats nuclear or otherwise to resolve disputes.<sup>11</sup> What is indeed interesting to note is that throughout large parts of the Cold War, the declared policy of the United States closely approximated MAD. To many, MAD prevented the Cold War from turning hot.<sup>12</sup>

Therefore, lending credence to the argument that if the United States could not have threatened to escalate a conflict by using nuclear weapons, then the Soviet would have had free rein to fight and win a conventional war in Europe. Was it not for all these efforts, it is highly probable that a conventional war in Europe or, even more likely, the limited use of nuclear weapons would have prompted a full-scale nuclear. Therefore, this theory prevents the world from going down in a glorious ball of fire, so long as no one pulls this trigger.

### *C. The Historical and Contemporary Precedents against Territorial Wars*

This debate on nuclear primacy, balance of power and thermonuclear Armageddon may now seem like ancient history, but it is actually more relevant than ever-because the age of MAD is nearing its end. The cold war has ended and so has the bipolar system of world order. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century is characterized by a ‘*multipolar*’ system where the Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) defence strategy has become a SAD (i.e., Self-Assured Destruction) potential.<sup>13</sup> The contemporary situation is vastly different. The United States no longer possesses strategic superiority. The weapons balance between the superpowers is now one of rough parity, with the United States ‘*ahead*’ in some measures of capability and the China, Russia, France, Germany, etc., having other numerical advantages and strengths.

Revealingly, the last intense nuclear standoff, i.e., the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, occurred at the dawn of the MAD era. Because of this nuclear stalemate, optimists argued, the era of intentional great-power wars has come to an end. In third world and developing countries, in certain scenarios, MAD deterrence still works to some degree. Take for instance the recent

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<sup>11</sup> Keir A Lieber and Daryl G Press, ‘The Rise of U.S. Nuclear Primacy’ (2006) 85(2) Foreign Affairs 42, 44.

<sup>12</sup> Robert Wilde, ‘Mutually Assured Destruction’ (*ThoughtCo*, 28 December 2017) <<https://www.thoughtco.com/mutually-assured-destruction-1221190>> accessed 14 March 2019.

<sup>13</sup> Dean Babst, ‘Self-Assured Destruction (SAD)’ (1989) 21(3) Peace Research 41, 41-44.

spate of the Indian military staged ‘*surgical strikes*’ against targets just across the border in Pakistan.<sup>14</sup>

It would be suicidal for Pakistan to retaliate against India with nuclear weapons. Some have commented that a nuclear war could begin if the Indian government launched a large military incursion aimed at destroying terrorist camps or punishing Pakistan for supporting terrorist groups such as *Jaish-e-Mohammed*. However, the threat of escalation also makes *deterrence* preferable to *defend and defeat*. Therefore, the presence and prevalence of high intensity localized warfare shall always be an option but nothing on the scale of a nuclear apocalypse.

#### §IV. THE NEXT GLOBAL WAR: PREDICTIONS AND PROTECTIONS

There are *two* kinds of wars that the world shall have to be prepared for and a *third* that are gaining immense notoriety post-9 September 2011, namely, *Information Warfare*, *Trade Wars* and the *War against Terrorism*.

##### A. *Information Warfare*

We live in what is popularly known as the ‘*Information Age*’. It was said that the Library of Alexandria housed the sum of human knowledge. Today, there is enough information in the world to give every person alive 320 times as much of it as historians think was stored in Alexandria’s entire collection—an estimated 1,200 exabytes’ worth.<sup>15</sup> Using such great volumes of information requires profound changes in how we approach data.

Today, civilian as well as military matters are more dependent on electronic information systems. Modern societies are extremely dependent on information systems, and civilian information infrastructure like commercial communications, broadcasting networks, financial data systems, transportation control systems, and so on. Unsurprisingly, these public information systems are often the target of cyber attacks.

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<sup>14</sup> Jeffrey Gettleman, ‘India Threatens a New Weapon against Pakistan: Water’ *The New York Times* (New Delhi, 21 February 2019) <<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/21/world/asia/india-pakistan-water-kashmir.html>> accessed 13 March 2019.

<sup>15</sup> Kenneth Neil Cukier and Viktor Mayer-Schoenberger, ‘The Rise of Big Data: How it’s Changing the Way We Think about the World’ (*Foreign Affairs*, 2013) <<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2013-04-03/rise-big-data>> accessed 12 March 2019.

This has portentous implications for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as warfare in contemporary times, takes place in a technology context that brings with it newer complexity into the fabric of military-strategic planning. Strategic information warfare (hereinafter ‘IW’) depends on exploiting vulnerabilities in the information infrastructure in time of peace, crisis, or war by state or non-state actor(s) so as to deny potential or actual foes—countries, terrorist groups, multinational corporations, and so on—the ability to exploit the same means against it.<sup>16</sup>

Not only is this strategy of attacking civilian information infrastructure more effective in crippling or hurting an opponent, but it often has some special advantages of its own. It is easier, less expensive and certainly less risky than sabotage, assassination, hijacking, hostage-taking or terrorism.<sup>17</sup> Entry costs to IW are low,<sup>18</sup> thus making IW threats an aggressor’s strategy of choice.<sup>19</sup> That such a scenario has been portrayed in recent Hollywood spy fictions such as *Johnny English Strikes Again* (2018) and *James Bond: Sceptre* (2015)<sup>20</sup> only speaks to the underlying sense of unease at the overlapping jurisdictions of cyber, national and data security.

One way to guard ourselves against the impact of IW is not just an adjustment in military thinking but a complete rethinking of how to wage war. One of the greatest difficulties in deterring IW threat is the information technology is sufficiently advanced to let an attacker remain anonymous but not enough so the perpetrator can be identified.<sup>21</sup>

### *B. Trade Wars: A Misguided Method of Economic Coercion*

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<sup>16</sup> Stephen J Cimbala, ‘Chasing its Tail: Nuclear Deterrence in the Information Age’ (2012) 6(2) Strategic Studies Quarterly 18, 18.

<sup>17</sup> *ibid* 177.

<sup>18</sup> Berkowitz (n 15) 182.

<sup>19</sup> Bruce D Berkowitz, ‘Warfare in the Information Age’ in John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt (eds), *In Athena's Camp-Preparing for Conflict in the Information Age* (RAND Corporation 1997) 175.

<sup>20</sup> In the movie, *James Bond: Sceptre* (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and Columbia Pictures 2015), Agent ‘M’ commented that-

*(‘... I’m frightened because our enemies are no longer known to us. They no longer exist on a map, they’re not nations. They are individuals. Now look around you, who do you, fear? Can you see a face, a uniform, a flag? No, our world is not more transparent now, it is more opaque. It’s in the shadows. That’s where we must do battle.’)*

<sup>21</sup> Roger C Molander *et al*, *Strategic Information Warfare: A New Face of War* (RAND Corporation 1996) 1-2.

A form of economic warfare, trade wars are often retaliatory and coercive trade sanctions intended to have undesirable effects on the target country. The most recognized user has been the United States which has in the past imposed economic sanctions most notoriously on Cuba, on the Russian Federation for the annexation of Crimea and most recently on Chinese steel in particular and Chinese trade practices in general, but these are hardly the only ones.<sup>22</sup>

Skepticism concerning the judiciousness of imposing trade sanction arises from several quarters. It has been observed that the undesirable effects of retaliatory trade sanctions negatively affect not only the target country but also on the country imposing the sanctions and sometimes even third, unrelated countries. Not to mention that unilateral sanctions rarely work. Therefore it should come as no surprise that there is a widespread feeling that unilateral economic sanctions have been greatly misused in the past primarily for scoring political points by appeasing the vocal domestic political constituency or for other rhetorical purposes in the home country.

What is to be realized is that increasing integration of the world's economies makes it exceedingly impossible for the any economy to urge a trade war without '*shooting itself in the foot*'. The same process of globalization that drives companies to buy raw materials where they are cheapest, also push them to make finished goods where the costs are lowest (which very often is in the one and the same country). As such, it is hard to tell who wins and who loses in a trade war.

Multilateral trading arrangements in the future must therefore, take a fresh look at the rationale of permitting economies to impose of several unilateral trade measures such as anti-dumping duty, countervailing duty, safeguard measures and find an efficient alternative to sanctions in the interest of safeguarding free trade as a basis of international trade.<sup>23</sup>

Whatever may be the judiciousness or lack thereof, of trade wars, what is certain that imposition of unilateral economic sanctions remains a *fan favorite, easy, emotionally satisfying, feel-good unilateral and lazy* way of doing something serious against foreign regimes that run afoul of (most often a 'developed') country's delicate sensibilities, without

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<sup>22</sup> 'A Quick Guide to the US-China Trade War (*BBC World News*, 7 January 2019) <<https://www.bbc.com/news/business-45899310>> accessed 15 March 2019.

<sup>23</sup> C Satapathy, 'Trade Sanctions and Other Barriers to Free Trade' (1999) 34(51) *Economic and Political Weekly* 3583, 3583-5.

putting military troops in harm's way. However, what is indisputable is that economic sanctions are used widely and frequently and if current trends are to be believed seem to be used in like manner for the predictable future. Therefore, trade wars are likely to be the method by which the subsequent battles shall be fought.

### *C. The War against Terrorism*

As the 21<sup>st</sup> century began, it was clear that no one was safe from terrorist insurgencies. After 9/11 terrorism became the leading preoccupation of politicians, police chiefs, journalists, and writers. The very fact that makes terrorism so terrifying is its tendency to defy the logic of conventional warfare. Terrorist and insurgent groups, who seek to mobilize a population toward a vision of the future believed to be unachievable without violence.<sup>24</sup> Terrorist insurgencies constitute the primary warfare threat facing the international community.<sup>25</sup>

Terrorism has been defined as-

*'A tactic of warfare involving premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated by sub national groups or clandestine agents against any citizen of a state, whether civilian or military, to influence, coerce, and, if possible, cause mass casualties and physical destruction upon their targets. Unlike guerrilla forces, terrorist groups are less capable of overthrowing their adversaries' governments than on inflicting discriminate or indiscriminate destruction that they hope will coerce them to change policy.'*<sup>26</sup>

State-sponsored terrorism has not disappeared. History shows that terrorism more often than not has little political impact, and that when it has an effect, it is often the opposite of the one desired. The 1991 assassination of Rajiv Gandhi as he campaigned to retake the prime ministership did not inhibited the Indian National Congress from gaining power, on the contrary the wave of sympathy provided a much needed fillip launching the Congress into a new era of a record absolute majority in the parliament.

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<sup>24</sup> James JF Forest, 'Influence Warfare and Modern Terrorism' (2009) 10(1) Georgetown Journal of International Affairs 81, 81.

<sup>25</sup> Joshua Sinai, 'How to Define Terrorism' (2008) 2(4) Perspectives on Terrorism 9, 9.

<sup>26</sup> *ibid* 11.

Finally, the common wisdom holds that terrorism can spark a war or, at least, prevent peace, but that is true only where there is preexisting inflammable material: as in Sarajevo in 1914, the Middle East, etc.<sup>27</sup>

## CONCLUSION(S)

In conclusion, it may be said that the colossal wave of globalization, democratization, interdependence and digitization has indeed challenged conventional conceptions of how war is done and disputes resolved. It is in this manner the essay attempted to explain (*See* sections **I** and **II**) and resolve (*See* sections **III** and **IV**) this seemingly intractable *Gordian knot* of predicting the next global war. The essay concludes that liberal democracies enhance peace and do not go to war against each other because they adhere to the *three* pillars of economic cooperation, common moral values, and peaceful conflict resolution among democratic states. Through this process of cooperation there is a legitimate and optimistic expectation among nation states that there will be a steadily expanding ‘*zone of peace*’, even though occasional setbacks are inevitable.<sup>28</sup>

It is also concluded that the era of MAD doctrine which hitherto curbed the escalation of conventional conflicts into full blown global warfare by maintaining the BOP in a bipolar world, may very soon be circumscribed in a multipolar world due to the emergence of newer more complex, forms of conflicts like trade wars, information warfare, and terrorism, etc which operate in the abstract or even the virtual. Furthermore, this essay also throws light on how of the *three* forms of conflicts examined, trade wars remains the instrument of choice, widely used and frequently employed. Trade wars remain most likely of the three methods by which the subsequent battles shall be fought globally due to the *maximum ease and effectiveness* and *minimum sacrifice* with which goals of an economy can be achieved.

Finally, this essay points to a world that is driven more by mutually beneficial cooperation than by antagonistic conflict. However, this should by no means to be interpreted to mean that conflicts will absolutely cease. Newer forms and arenas of conflict shall emerge. Conflicts will be muted to a certain extent, however, conflicts there shall be. Therefore, the presence

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<sup>27</sup> Walter Laqueur, ‘Postmodern Terrorism’ (1996) 75(5) Foreign Affairs 24, 28.

<sup>28</sup> *ibid* 103-4.

and prevalence of high intensity localized warfare shall always be an option but nothing on the scale of a nuclear apocalypse. The future has always belonged to the brave and the bold. We have to take our chances and therefore, evidently, the future belongs to those who embrace these challenges. How we respond to this proposition will determine whether the present generation lodges its name in the pages of history, or risk being forever forgotten as an irrelevant footnote in the tomes of history.

Therefore, in this manner, the essay concludes by proving the initial proposition that *'considering the case made for the improbability of large-scale pan-global territorial wars in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the phenomenon of territorial wars shall be subsumed by the greater probability of other, more complex, forms of conflicts like trade wars, information warfare, and terrorism, etc., with the next global battle primarily being trade wars'*.

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